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U.S. Must Show "Credible Will" in Arms Talks

Q In Central America, do you favor more U.S. aid to rebels fighting the leftist government in Nicaragua?

A Yes. But I think the rationale for that assistance must be reformulated before Congress will vote for it. It is one thing to give covert aid to help the rebels to interdict shipments from Nicaragua to destabilize El Salvador or other Central American countries. If we've changed the rationale from interdiction to overthrow of the Nicaraguan government, then we have to examine if that is really what we wanted to do.

I hope to be a part of the discussion of what is achievable, what we should be doing and what leverage might change the situation. We need to come to some agreement that is credible with the Nicaraguans, that they will not be a base for Soviet activity and that they will not destabilize others around them. That may be doable.

Q What are the prospects for peace in El Salvador?

A Getting better. The reconciliation efforts between the rebels and the Salvadoran government have died down for a while because they're about to have additional elections, and there is some tension prior to that. Militarily, the government apparently has been more and more successful as time has gone on, in large part because President Duarte has had the support of a majority of his people.

Q What would it take to normalize our relations with Cuba?

A We've been trying very hard over the years. Of course, we've had this fairly

substantial agreement recently with regard to refugees and repatriation. That, given the nature of the relationship, was amazing in a way. But it is sort of breathtaking, leaping from that to normalization. In the event of an indication of serious desire on the part of the Cubans for that to occur, I'm certain the Secretary of State would be fully prepared to test the waters.

Q Should the United States be doing more to aid the Afghans in their fight against Soviet rule?

A That is a classified program. I would just say that what we are doing is appropriate and important.

Q Do you have any proof of the ties between the drug trade and terrorism?

A No. I'm just aware from various discussions—some classified and some open—that there's concern about this.



*Interview With
Richard Lugar,
Chairman, Senate Foreign
Relations Committee*

Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), 52, was mayor of Indianapolis before his election to the Senate in 1976. Re-elected in 1982, the former Rhodes scholar is noted for his expertise in urban affairs as well as foreign policy. He is considered a pragmatic conservative.